EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE EIR

The County of San Mateo (County), serving as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), has prepared this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to assess the impacts that may result from approval of a Grading Permit to allow for the construction of the Canyon Lane Roadway Improvements Development Project (project). The County has approval authority and responsibility for considering the environmental effects of the project as a whole. The City of Redwood City (City) and San Mateo Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) will serve as Responsible Agencies under CEQA.

The EIR will be used for the following discretionary approvals:

- Approval of a Grading Permit by the Planning Commission for the improvement of Canyon Lane, the construction of a single-span bridge across an unnamed creek at the north side of the roadway as part of a required turnaround area for emergency vehicles, and construction of one single-family residence;
- Design review approval by the Planning Commission;
- Variance approval by the Planning Commission for grading associated with a single-family residence where the grading quantity will exceed 1,000 cubic yards in the County's RH/DR Zoning District;
- Approval of an Outside Service Agreement by LAFCo and the City to extend Redwood City water service outside of City jurisdictional boundaries for a new (minimum) 8-inch water line.

2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives (underlying purpose) identified for the project include those put forth by the Applicant as well as the County. The project objectives are as follows:

- To improve Canyon Lane in order to facilitate routine and emergency access to 12 parcels that would become developable. The objectives of the individual future property owners may vary, but, assuming project approval, owners of the lots could construct single-family homes in accordance with zoning restrictions, with any necessary subsequent environmental review, and after approval of all necessary planning and building permits.
- To provide housing, and the opportunity for future housing on lots associated with the project, on an underutilized site that is currently zoned for single-family housing.
- Assist in maximizing housing opportunities in San Mateo County, while maintaining the predominantly single-family character of the neighborhood.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project involves the improvement of Canyon Lane and development of a single-family residence on one parcel. The improvements to Canyon Lane will create the potential for future development of residences on eleven parcels that are currently inaccessible and without services. Construction activities associated with the improvement of Canyon Lane would involve regrading and paving the existing gravel roadway into a 20-foot-wide paved roadway. Improvements to Canyon Lane would include adding a

stitch pier wall along the south side of the roadway, a turnaround for emergency vehicles, and a single-span bridge that would cross the intermittent Emerald Branch that traverses the project area. The roadway improvements would also include the construction of a minimum 8-inch water line that would extend approximately 1,050 linear feet to connect the water mains at Glenwood Avenue and Vista Drive to provide water service and fire protection to the 12 parcels. Other roadway utilities include a new underground 12 kilovolt (kV) distribution line and an existing sewer main underlying Canyon Lane. Stormwater on the roadway would be conveyed through a storm drain that runs east along the south side of Canyon Lane. Four catch basins with 9-inch side openings would be installed along the storm drain to facilitate drainage. Stormwater would flow into an approximately 161-foot-long biotreatment swale that would be installed near the base of Canyon Lane.

Construction activities associated with the singe-family residence would involve the construction of an approximately 3,847-square-foot single-family residence on a merged parcel (057-222-290 & 300) of approximately 16,151 square feet. The proposed residence would have a lot coverage of no more than 25 percent, Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of no more than 30 percent, and would comprise three levels: a garage level, a main level, and an upper level. Stormwater runoff collected on the property would be conveyed along a new storm drain installed within the backyard to the south of the residence. The storm drain would traverse the property, traveling from the western edge to the eastern edge, and would include a bioretention system near the western end of the storm drain. Sewer services would be provided to the property by a new lateral that would connect the property to the existing sewer main beneath Canyon Lane. Water would be provided by a new lateral that would connect to the proposed water line beneath Canyon Lane. Electricity would be provided by the new underground 12 kV distribution line.

The improvements to Canyon Lane would extend the road and utilities to 11 other existing legal parcels, which is reasonably expected to allow for the future development of the 11 remaining parcels; however, no development is currently proposed for these parcels. As required under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d), future development of these parcels is analyzed in the EIR as a growth-inducing and reasonably foreseeable impact as a result of the project.

The project area is located on approximately 3.8 acres within the Emerald Lake Hills area of the County. The project area is located along Canyon Lane east of Lower Emerald Lake and west of George L Garrett Jr. Memorial Park (Garrett Park) and encompasses 12 undeveloped parcels. One parcel (APN 057-221-060) is located within the City and the 11 remaining parcels (APNs 057-221-070, 057-221-090, 057-221-100, 057-221-110, 057-222-210, 057-222-220 & 230, 057-222-240 & 250, 057-222-260, 057-222-270, 057-222-280, 057-222-290 & 300) are located within the unincorporated County.

4. AREAS OF PUBLIC CONTROVERSY

The County held a public scoping meeting at the County Planning and Building Department on December 18, 2018. The Notice of Preparation review period closed on January 10, 2019. The purpose of the meeting was to inform the public on the environmental review process and to receive public comment on the scope of the EIR. Oral and written comments were received from the public. Comments were received on the following topics:

- **Biological Resources**
    - Adequacy of any proposed tree mitigation measures that do not account for the maturity and size of the trees being removed as part of the project.
    - Biological and aesthetic value that would be lost when replacing mature trees with immature trees.
    - Impacts on special-status plant species.

  - Potential adverse effects to riparian areas and wildlife species resulting from tree removal and grading activities.

- **Land Use**
  - The City of Redwood City's authority and approval over the realignment of Canyon Lane.
- **Population and Housing**
  - The impacts from population growth resulting from the project and similar housing projects occurring in the area.
- **Wildfire**
  - The potential wildfire risks associated with siting a project within a canyon with limited entry and exit points.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality**
  - The potential threats to life and property resulting from the failure of the Emerald Lake Dam. The integrity of the dam was also called into question due to its age and constructed material.
  - Potential impacts to water quality associated with the Hetch Hetchy water system.
  - Potential impacts to drainage patterns and water quality that would result from grading activities along the roadway and at all 12 parcels.
  - The effects of climate change and increased rainfall intensity on flooding hazards and water releases associated with Emerald Lake Dam.
- **Noise**
  - The potential for the canyon's ability to influence and amplify sound generated during construction and operation of the project.
  - The effect of tree removal on noise generated during construction and operation of the project.
- **Transportation and Traffic**
  - The increased traffic that would be generated by the project and the potential to increase congestion on local roadways that are already operating at high levels of service, thus making ingress and egress into the Emerald Hills area more difficult.
- **Recreation**
  - Potential recreational impacts to the community from any restricted public access to Canyon Lane. Canyon Lane is informally used for dog walking and hiking, and is perceived as an extension of nearby George L Garrett Jr. Memorial Park (Garrett Park).
- **Utilities and Service Systems**
  - Potential impacts to the existing sewer system.
- **Other Topics**
  - The potential for the project to affect the rights to release water from Emerald Lake into the ephemeral stream.
  - Access to the stream for California Department of Water Resources inspections related to the Emerald Lake Dam.

Prior to the EIR scoping meeting and initiation of the CEQA process, the County facilitated a pre-application workshop for the proposed project on August 4, 2016. Concerns over the project were the same as those listed above.

5. SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED

The scope of the EIR includes an analysis of all potential environmental impacts associated with the project and alternatives for the project. The EIR includes an analysis of the following resource areas:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources (including Tribal Cultural Resources)
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gases
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

Impacts of the project and alternatives have been classified using the following categories:

- **Significant, unavoidable, adverse impacts:** This determination applies to adverse effects that exceed the applicable significance criteria and that cannot be fully and effectively mitigated. No measures could be taken to avoid or reduce these adverse effects to insignificant or negligible levels.
- **Significant, but mitigable impacts:** This determination applies if the project would result in an adverse effect that exceeds the applicable significance criterion for a significant impact, but feasible mitigation measures are available that would eliminate the impact or reduce it to a less-than-significant impact. These impacts are potentially similar in significance to significant, unavoidable, adverse impacts, but can be substantially reduced or avoided by the implementation of mitigation measures.
- **Less than significant impacts:** This impact determination applies when there is a potential for some limited impact, but not a substantial adverse effect that qualifies under the applicable significance criterion as a significant impact. Mitigation measures may still be required for these impacts as long as there is rough proportionality between the environmental impacts caused by the Project and the mitigation measures imposed on the project.

Potentially significant impacts and mitigation measures are summarized below and provided in Table ES-1, Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures. The table includes all identified potentially significant impacts, which are identified with an impact number (e.g., AES Impact 1).

Project Impacts

Potential project impacts and associated mitigation measures are summarized in Table ES-1.

6. PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Criteria used to develop a reasonable range of alternatives included the potential to avoid significant impacts and whether or not the considered alternative could generally meet the project objectives. Identified alternatives are summarized below.

Alternative 1: Reduced Roadway

The Reduced Roadway Alternative would limit the roadway improvement activities to approximately 550 feet. The Reduced Roadway Length Alternative would be sufficient to reach the proposed single-family residence. Because the roadway would not reach the developable parcels, only the proposed single-family residence would be constructed as part of the project. The Reduced Roadway Alternative would include an emergency-vehicle turnaround designed and constructed in accordance with the California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9 of the California Code of Regulations).

Table ES-1. Summary of Project Impacts

Resource Area	Significant and Unavoidable	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Impact Summary	Mitigation Number
Aesthetics	☐	☒	☐	☐	1. The project would remove existing vegetation, including 43 trees 2. The project would result in the introduction of new light to the area	1. AE/mm-1 2. AE/mm-2
Agricultural and Forestry	☐	☐	☐	☒	No agricultural or forest resources are present on the project area	Not Applicable (NA)
Air Quality	☐	☒	☐	☐	The project would create fugitive dust emissions	AQ/mm-1.1
Biological Resources	☒	☐	☐	☐	1. The project could potentially impact the bent-flowered fiddleneck 2. The project could potentially impact the San Mateo Wooly Sunflower 3. The project could potentially impact San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat nests 4. The project could potentially impact the western pond turtle 5. The project could potentially impact nesting birds 6. The project could potentially impact roosting bats 7. The project could promote invasion of non-native species 8. The project would result in the removal of 32 trees within the riparian zone along Canyon Lane as well as within the proposed water line installation area 9. The project could potentially impact potentially jurisdictional water features 10. The project could potentially impact protected trees, as defined by the Redwood City Tree Preservation Ordinance and the San Mateo County Significant Tree Ordinance	1. BIO/mm-1.1-1.3 2. BIO/mm-2.1-2.2 3. BIO/mm-3.1-3.3 4. BIO/mm-4.1 5. BIO/mm-5.1-5.3 6. BIO/mm-6.1 7. BIO/mm-7.1 8. BIO/mm-8.1-8.3 9. BIO/mm-9.1-9.2 10. BIO/mm-10.1-10.3
Cultural Resources	☐	☒	☐	☐	1. The project would have the potential to result in unanticipated discoveries of subsurface archaeological resources 2. The project has the potential to result in unanticipated discoveries of subsurface human remains	1. CUL/mm-1.1 2. CUL/mm-2.1
Energy	☐	☐	☒	☐	The project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy.	NA
Geology and Soils	☐	☒	☐	☐	1. The project could expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects involving seismic hazards, resulting in potentially significant impacts. 2. The project could result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil 3. The project could cause the destruction of paleontological resources, resulting in potentially significant impacts.	1. GEO/mm-1.1-1.2 2. GEO/mm-1.3 3. GEO/mm-1.4-1.5
Greenhouse Gas	☐	☒	☐	☐	The project would require the use of construction equipment and worker vehicles that would generate GHG emissions	GHG/mm-1.1-1.3
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	☐	☒	☐	☐	Construction of the project would involve the routine use, transport, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, which could potentially expose the public, construction workers, and the environment to potentially hazardous materials	HAZ/mm-1.1
Hydrology and Water Quality	☒	☐	☐	☐	The project would risk the release of pollutants due to project inundation by the failure of the Emerald Lake Lower Dam	NANA
Land Use and Planning	☐	☐	☒	☐	The project is consistent with land use plans and policies and would obtain a variance for grading limit exceedances	NA
Mineral Resources	☐	☐	☐	☒	No mineral resources are located in the project area	NA
Noise	☐	☒	☐	☐	The project would result in temporary elevate noise levels during construction activities	NOI/mm-1.1-1.2
Population and Housing	☐	☐	☒	☐	The project would result in increases in population and housing consistent with planned population and housing growth	NA
Public Services	☐	☐	☒	☐	The project would result in negligible increases in demand for public services	NA
Recreation	☐	☐	☒	☐	The project would result in negligible increases in demand for recreational facilities	NA
Transportation and Traffic	☐	☐	☒	☐	The project would result in an increase in vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled; however, it would not conflict with circulation, nor result in a hazard or inadequate emergency access	NA

Utilities and Service Systems	☐	☐	☒	☐	The project would result in negligible increases in demand for utilities and service systems	NA
Wildfire					Project construction activities could spark a wildfire in an area subject to prevailing westerly winds and within a high fire hazard severity zone The proposed single-family residence and Canyon Lane improvements would not exacerbate wildfire risk	WF/mm-1.1-1.3

Alternative 2: Annexation

The Annexation Alternative would involve the annexation of the unincorporated area of the project area into the City prior to the occurrence of development. Under the Annexation Alternative, the project would be subject to the City's zoning and land use requirements.

No Project Alternative

The No Project Alternative would maintain existing conditions at the project area. No construction of the single-family residence or roadway improvements would occur. As a result, the other 11 parcels would remain inaccessible and would be unlikely to develop in the near term. As such, no environmental impacts would occur. However, the lots could be developed at a future time, subject to extension of the road and necessary services, and, in some cases, a process to confirm the legality of the lot. The No Project Alternative would fail to meet any of the project objectives and underlying purpose. The No Project Alternative would not provide residential development and opportunities for future development, would not provide routine and emergency access to any of the developable parcels and proposed single-family residence, and would not assist in maximizing housing opportunities in San Mateo County, while maintaining the predominantly single-family character of the neighborhood.

7. ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

CEQA requires the alternatives section of an EIR to describe a reasonable range of alternatives to the project that avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects identified in the EIR analysis while still attaining most of the basic project objectives. The alternative that most effectively reduces impacts while meeting project objectives should be considered the "environmentally superior alternative." In the event that the No Project Alternative is considered the Environmentally Superior Alternative, the EIR should identify the Environmentally Superior Alternative among the other alternatives.

The No Project Alternative is the Environmentally Superior Alternative, as it would avoid all impacts of the project and would not create any new significant impacts of its own. However, the No Project Alternative would fail to contribute toward meeting the County's Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocations identified in Table 3.14-5 in Chapter 3.14, Population and Housing, and would not benefit local communities through creation of jobs, demand for local goods and services, and increased sales and use tax revenue. Additionally, the No Project Alternative also would fail to meet any of the basic project objectives, including the provision of housing and routine and emergency access to developable parcels. Since the Environmentally Superior Alternative is the No Project Alternative, the Reduced Roadway Alternative was identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative among the other alternatives based strictly on an analysis of the relative environmental impacts.

The Reduced Roadway Alternative would substantially reduce impacts to biological resources and would require less ground disturbance and impervious hardscaping. However, the significant and unavoidable impact related to flooding hazards cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level under this alternative. This alternative would only partially meet the project objectives, as it would fail to maximize housing opportunities within the County and facilitate future development of residentially-zoned property. Further, this alternative's contribution towards the County's Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation and General Plan goals would be reduced when compared to the Project.

The Annexation Alternative may change the scale of the single-family residences associated with the future developable parcels, as the City's Residential Hillside Zoning District--a zoning designation that

would likely apply to the Annexation Alternative—allows for a substantially greater lot coverage allowance (40 percent) than the proposed project and has no maximum FAR. Because the Annexation Alternative may result in the construction of larger residences, this alternative could result in greater impacts to some environmental resources. This alternative would not avoid or substantially reduce any of the potentially significant effects of the project and is, therefore, not considered an environmentally superior alternative.